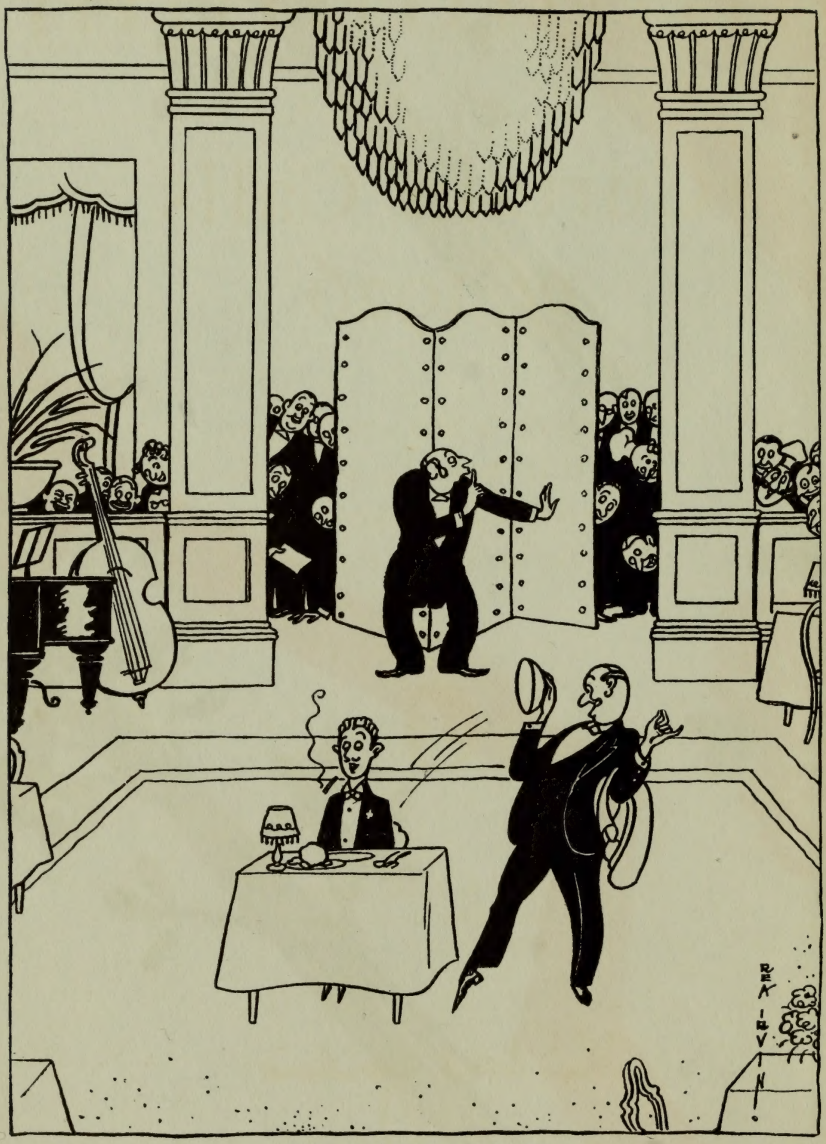
CURTAIN CALLS OF 1926



THE TOMATO SURPRISE

Curtain Calls *of* 1926

In which a few choice rare bits that have occasionally appeared in the pages of The New Yorker repeat themselves

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by

The New Yorkers

DIALOGUE AT THREE IN THE MORNING

PLAIN water in mine," said the woman in the petunia-colored hat. "Or never mind about the water. Hell with it. Just straight Scotch. What I care? Just straight. That's me. Never gave anybody any trouble in my life. All right, they can say what they like about me, but I know—I know—I never gave anybody any trouble in my life. You can tell them that from me, see? What I care?"

"Listen," said the man with the ice-blue hair. And he leaned across the table toward her, and frowned heavily at the designs he drew with the plated knife. "Listen. I just want you to get this thing clear—"

"Yeah," she said. "Get things clear. That's good. That gives me a big laugh. That's laughable, a thing like that is. Say, if there's anybody around here that's going to get things clear, I'm going to be the one around here that's going to get things clear. What you do, you go back to Jeannette, see, and you tell her I know what she's saying about me. I don't want to get you into this, but you tell her that from me. You can keep out of it. You don't have to tell her you told me. You don't even have to tell her you saw me. Say, if you're ashamed to tell people you know me, that's all right with me, see? I'm not going to give anybody any trouble. If you're ashamed to tell your friends you're a friend of mine, what I care? I guess I'll be able to stand that, all right. I've stood a lot of things."

"Ah, listen," he said. "Listen. Will you please listen just a minute?"

"Yeah, listen," she said. "That's fine. Listen. Well, I'm through with this listening stuff. You can tell them all from me, see, I'm going to be the one that's going to do the talking from now on. You can tell Jeannette that. What I care? You can run right to her and blab that. Says I look fat in my red dress, does she? That's a nice thing to have anybody say about you. Makes you feel great, that does. You can tell Miss Jennette she's got a lot to do to make cracks about a person's red dress. That's pretty laughable, that is. Say, when I ask her to pay for anything I wear, then it will be time for her to crack. Her or anybody else. I make my own living, thank God, and I don't have to ask anybody for anything. You can tell them all that. You or anybody else."

"Will you do me a favor?" he said. "Will you do me one little favor? Will you? Will you listen just—"

"Yeah, favors," she said. "Nobody's got to do me any favors. I make my own living, and I don't have to ask any favors off of anybody. I never gave anybody any trouble in my life. And if they don't like it, they know what they can do. Tiffany's window, see? The whole lot of them. Oh, did I break that glass? Oh, isn't that terrible? I broke that glass. That's terrible. All right —if it's broken, it's broken. Isn't it? Hell with it. Hell with them all."

"If you'd listen—" he said. "There isn't anything for you to get sore about. Just listen—"

"Who's sore?" she said. "I'm not sore. I'm all right. You don't have to worry about me. You or Jeannette or anybody else. Sore. Say, if a person's not going to get sore about a thing like that, what kind of a thing is a person expected to get sore about? After all I've done for her. Trouble with me is, I'm too kind-hearted. That's what everybody always told me. 'Trouble with you is, you're too kind-hearted,' they said. And now look what she goes around and says about me. And you let her say a thing like that to you, and you're ashamed to say you're a friend of mine. All right, you don't have to. You can go back to Jeannette and stay there. The whole lot of you."

"Now listen, sweetheart," he said. "Haven't I always been your friend? Haven't I? Well now, wouldn't you listen to your friend just for a—"

"Friends," she said. "Friends. Fine lot of friends I got. Go around cutting your throat. That's what you get for being kind-hearted. Just a big kind-hearted slob. That's me. Oh, hell with the water. I'll drink it straight. I make my own living, and go around not giving anybody any trouble, and then the whole lot of them turn on me. After the way I was brought up, and the home we used to have, and all, and they go around making cracks about me. Work all day long, and don't ask anything off of anybody. And here I am with a weak heart, besides. I'd just as soon I was dead. What've I got to live for anyway? Kindly answer me that one question. What've I got to live for?"

Tears striped her cheeks.

The man with the ice-blue hair reached across the Scotch-soaked tablecloth and took her hand.

"Ah, listen," he said. "Listen."

From the unknown, a waiter appeared. He chirped and fluttered about them. Presently, you felt, he would cover them with leaves . . .

—Dorothy Parker

THE DOORMAN WHO FORGOT THE NAME OF THE OLDEST MEMBER

MUNSEY, THE JOURNALIST

THE death of Frank A. Munsey last week set quite a problem before the editors of the better half of our daily press. Their knowledge of the man, the deep personal feeling engendered by such knowledge, and their own intrinsic honesty prevented them from heaping upon his name the encomiums that are customary in the case of death.

They compromised with an evasion. They did not say that Munsey was good or bad. They contented themselves, for the most part, with a rehearsal of his dramatic and Algeresque acquisition of immense power, and refrained from writing down their conclusions regarding his use of that power once acquired. In feeble apology for this squeamishness, one or two left the matter, with the familiar platitudes, in the hands of time.

On the very night of Munsey's death, however, I chanced to fall in with a group of these editors, fresh from the writing of their formal epitaphs. Released from the inhibiting exactions of printed words, they talked freely of him, of his strange personality, his incredible performance as a newspaper man. Towards the end of their discourse—which touched hardly at all upon the loneliness and occasional wistfulness of Munsey, and never upon his activities as banker or hotel owner or stock trader—it was easily to be discerned that he aroused the bitterest animosities of any man who ever engaged in the business of printing news and opinions.

He was intensely disliked by the men who worked for him and whom he rewarded with such shoddy recompense. But that is a narrow field of bitterness in comparison with the prodigality of his sowing among men who look, with understanding eyes and not without devotion, upon the expansive profession of journalism.

Nobody, one decides, knew him intimately. His friends were always excessively polite friends. Nobody knew just what went on behind that austere and always gentlemanly exterior. So judgment of him, by men disposed to pass such judgment, must proceed from his actions—the tangible manifestations of this personality—rather than from any projection into the motives that lay behind them.

Naturally, his actions toward persons are more often recounted than his actions towards theories, or towards such an imponderable thing as a profession. They bit deeper, and they provide explanation enough of the more intimate animosities which he left behind. He had not owned the *Herald* a month, for illustration, before he began to reveal his attitude toward his men. One night he came into the editorial room during the excited hour just before press time. Among the copy editors he observed three grey-haired men. Without inquiring their names, their value to the paper, or the extent of their service in the organization, he

gave instructions that they be dismissed forthwith. They were too old, he said in brief explanation.

Within a few weeks, he visited the *Herald* office again at night. His eye fell upon a youthful man, occupying an editor's chair.

"Who is that?" he inquired. And when told that the man was the night city editor, he said: "Remove him, please, at once. He is much too young."

Similar unhappiness befell three left-handed men in the office of the Washington *Times*, during the period of Munsey's ownership—three luckless fellows who, swayed by the gentle smile that accompanied their employer's interrogation, readily admitted their eccentricity. And his peremptory order that all fat men, being inefficient and probably lazy, be expelled from the *Sun* staff, cost four copy editors their jobs.

SO much for his contacts with the lower ranks. His dealings with editors were only slightly different—less blunt, perhaps, but hardly less cold. When he sold the *Herald* into its merger with the *Tribune*, the arrangements were completed without consulting the *Herald's* veteran managing editor, Charles Lincoln. On the last night of the *Herald's* life, Lincoln had been given no hint that the paper had been sold. He prepared his front page as usual. But a few moments before the presses began to run, he was handed a formal statement, with orders that it be set into large type and printed on the first page. That was the statement announcing to the paper's readers that it had ceased, with that issue, to exist.

Munsey asked Lincoln to remain with him, and take charge of the *Telegram*, which he owned. Lincoln declined. "I have regretted every moment that I worked for you," he said. "And I have no intention of continuing such a distasteful association."

Before Munsey disposed of the *Herald*, however, he was partner to another incident which has a significant bearing on his character.

It was his custom to invite to his frequent receptions at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel one or two of the executives of his papers. On this night, it was an editorial writer of the *Herald* who was so honored. The affair was uneventful until the first copies of next morning's edition were delivered to the Munsey apartment. He glanced first at the editorial page and came upon an article written by his employee-guest which manifestly displeased him. He at once approached the latter.

"You will please tell me at once," he said, while the guests listened, "what you mean by this ridiculous article."

"At this moment," replied the editorial writer, "I cannot explain the matter in detail. Neither can I remain longer as your guest or your employee."

The next day, Munsey wrote an abject letter of apology, urging the man to reconsider and come back to work. He received a curt note of refusal. Whereupon he repeated his regrets for his conduct, and inclosed in the second note a check for $10,000.

It is possible that this incident reveals a generous streak in the late publisher, a streak which he confessed

in his autobiography had been ground out of him by the rigors of his struggle. It may have grown from a paradoxical recrudescence of the sentimentality he possessed in the days when he wrote the "Boy Broker." On the other hand, it may be observed that he spent most of his life striving to be the perfect gentleman and, knowing that he had been deplorably boorish in offending his guest, sought to relieve his conscience of this lapse in manners by sending off the check.

BUT these violent whimsies, this scornful despotism over the destinies of a few men, however devastating they may have been to individuals suddenly reft of their living, were not of immense or lasting importance. The hatreds that grew from it were sired by hot anger, and therefore of no certain stamina.

On the contrary, the enmity felt toward Munsey by his peers: the owners and editors of papers, was a cooler emotion. They were contemptuous of this man who drained the fine, mad blood from every edge of journalism that he touched, reduced the trade of editor to that of shopkeeper, reduced the fury and rapture, the fleeting victories and magnificent errors of the press to a spiritless economic problem. Men of creative energy themselves, they could feel only scorn for an editor who had no part in the line of Dana and Bennett and Pulitzer and Ochs, and yet who gained a power far exceeding theirs.

His zest was for trading, for the shrewd turning of profits and for that preposterous blight to imaginative thinking called efficiency. He loved money for itself, if his occasional ostentatious showing of bankbooks listing huge figures may be viewed as a token of that emotion. His dream was to dominate men economically, not by intellect or the powerful expression of an idea.

During his whirl through the journalism of New York City his sole notion was to lay a sound commercial base for that journalism. And events quickly proceeded to demonstrate that even in that earthy ideal, he had a faulty line of reason. It was his postulate that New York had too many newspapers, which prevented some of them from making money. The only excuse for the existence of a newspaper, in his estimation, was its potentiality as a profit winner. So he proceeded to prune down the growth.

He killed the *Globe*, the *Mail* and the *Herald*—three newspapers. With the field reduced so much, he calculated, all the rest might earn handsomely. Yet, hardly had he put away his pruning knife before three new papers had sprouted: the *Mirror*, the *Graphic*, and the *Bulletin*.

Two, at least, of these have prospered. Prospered, that is, in Munsey's sense. He was incapable of regret that the *Globe* and *Herald* had died to make way for the *Graphic* and *Mirror*.

Of all his bartering, the only case in which he profited was the *Sun*. That paper earned $1,500,000 last year. And for some quaint reason—perhaps because New York simply demanded an intelligent afternoon news-paper once the *Globe* was gone—he did not blight that property with his philosophy of materialism.

It is his one achievement which does not draw the scorn of his fellows in the trade. Its success alone saved his newspaper career from being a great financial failure.

The dreams and labors of five thousand men made Bennett's *Herald* what it was. It was the old *Herald* that engaged upon such wild adventures as the sending of a reporter into the heart of Africa, or the despatch of an exploring expedition into the Arctic seas. And these ventures not only made romantic reading for the paper's circulation. They impressed a glamour upon the paper itself, gave it a personality as tangible and vivid as the personality of the most robust humans, a splendid pride and nervous life.

Munsey killed first the pride and then the life of the *Herald*. His manner in the latter action explains clearly his feeling and intentions toward all of journalism. The *Herald* and the *Tribune* were prospering. But Munsey saw a chance, by merging them, to bring about another of his economic coups. He was not hungry, personally, for the resulting profits. He was old; he had great quantities of money; he had no direct heirs to enrich with legacies. But he was ready to kill off either of these papers to establish one more profitable business. He offered either to sell his paper or buy the *Tribune*.

He had no compunctions, in that case, and no hunger for ownership. He simply wanted to take another gigantic trick.

Such was his whole interest in the bartering of newspapers. It cannot even be said of him that he killed papers because they opposed doctrine that he burned to spread. There was no such gusto about him. He owned them, procured them, or cut them down on the same principle as that which governed his management of the chain of grocery stores that he owned in New England. In the latter business, it was his infallible rule to close the store which did not produce $100 of net profits by each Saturday night.

As it fell out, he made no money from his juggling of papers. His losses, on the contrary, were in sharp contrast to the gains, neat but not gaudy, which his grocery stores handed him each week. Which perhaps justifies the conclusion that he was a green-grocer, cast by chance into the newspaper business.

He broke men and he broke high-hearted enterprises. And his only contributions to journalism were a timidity in the face of truth, a dulling of imaginative vigor, an equivocating want of spirit, and a subservience to the stalest ideals of the mediocre. New York being what it is, this heritage will soon be spent and a more worthy practice will supplant it. But the worst of Munsey's influence is upon the press of the hither country which, slow to change or cast off old designs, will persist for a painful time to follow his creed of commercialism, and self-satisfaction, and narrow dreams, and exaltation of the commonplace.

—Morris Markey

"Sh-h! Dun't esk!"

THE COSTUME BALLS

A Composite Report of the Season

THE Beaux Arts Ball or the Fakirs or the Kit Kat—or whatever it was—took place last night in the grand ballroom of some building whose identity could not be ascertained this morning. It was a riot of color. There were also several other riots, which however were promptly quelled by the quelling squad from the West Forty-seventh Street station, comprising Sergeant Joe Hennessey, chief queller; Sergeant Dominic Bastabione, assistant chief queller, and sub-quellers Davidson, McGobb, O'Shaughnessy, Murtaugh, Gidge and Weebish.

The building will recover, it was said this afternoon at Bellevue.

Sergeant Hennessey came as Louis XIV. He wore a costume said to have cost $6500. Sergeant Bastabione came as Louis XIV, but Patrolmen McGood, Murtaugh, Gidge, and Weebish, were costumed as Louis XIV. Conde Nast came as Louis XIV, and in striking contrast to Mr. Nast was Whitney Warren, who wore a magnificent costume of satin and jewels, as Louis XIV.

The pageant at this year's fete was "Washington Crossing the Delaware and Hudson" and the committee on decoration, comprising Frank Crowninshield, Charles Dana Gibson, Oakley T. Oakley, Frank Crowninshield, Alfred Meddie, Herbert Bayard

The Pageant at This Year's Fete Was Washington Crossing the Delaware and Hudson

Swope, Neysa McMein, Conde Nast, Frank Crowinshield, Terwilliger Hepstone, Charles Dana Gibson, Mayor General Summerall, Neysa McMein and Frank Crowinshield had transformed the spacious room into a veritable reproduction of the famous lawns in front of the Houses of Parliament. In the background, flanked by the American and French national anthems, stood the Houses of Parliament, which were portrayed by William H. (Big Bill) Edwards. Robert E. Sherwood took the part of the Washington Monument, which could be seen in the distance on a clear day. Mr. Edwards was costumed as Louis XIV and Mr. Sherwood was dressed as Louis XIV, King of France, Emporer of the Sahara and Le Grand Monarque.

Society attended en masse. Mrs. Elleridge McW. McWeedum came as Louis XIV. She wore the customary powdered wig, bobbed after the fashion of the period, and a gown of genuine crystal trimmed with window shades which were pulled down. Mrs. May McWeedum Gansevoort, third wife of E. McW. McWeedum, also came as Louis XIV. *On dit* that the third Mrs. McWeedum heard at the last moment that her successor in the affections of that ever-popular bachelor, Mr. McWeedum was going as Louis XIV, and so decided, as a prank, to go as the same Louis XIV, only in a costume that would make the fourth Mrs. McWeedum feel like thirty cents. She wore a gown of simple plate glass, with blue velvet curtains and no shades. On seeing her rival, the other Mrs. McWeedum was exceedingly angry and caused a scene when she made the master of cermonies mount the platform and announce that the Louis XIV represented by her was in no way connected with the Louis XIV represented by the other Mrs. McWeedum.

Among the prettiest of the debutantes present was Mrs Hawthorne, grandmother of the Duchess of Margate, she that was Cornelia Hawthorne Hawthorne. The dowager Mrs. Hawthorne's costume was the sensation of the ball. She came as Mary Queen of Scots from the neck up. From the neck to the waist she was Madame de Maintenon. From the waist to the knees she was Paul Revere. One leg came as Ninon de l'Enclos, and the other leg was the Lost Dauphin. Her shoes, done in the modern Gothic style, represented the advance in modes of canal transportation from the time of 1817 when Mrs Hawthorne opened the Erie Canal by breaking a bottle of champagne on Governor Dewitt Clinton's bow, to the Panama Canal, which she opened nearly a hundred years later by breaking the mate to the first bottle on President Roosevelt's bow.

Mrs. Hawthorne was awarded first prize, a safety razor and a pair of cuffs, by the committee on awards, which consisted of Whitney Warren, Conde Nast, Ambrose Glutz, Frank Crowninshield, Neysa McMein, Whitney Warren, Conde Nast, Neysa McMein and the late Dr. Elwood Speering, author of "Why Human Beings Behave Like Damn Fools".

Promptly at three o'clock there was a fanfare of trumpets and the usual scrap between a Yale or Princeton student and some other fellow was announced. This year's scrap was between a Yale sophomore named

Joie and a maker of cloaks and suits who described himself as Isidore Wimberg. The fight this year was over a Follies girl named Yvonne. Isidore Wimberg protested that he had found Yvonne in a box. He said she had no collar, license tag or other fixture which would enable him to identify her. He added that he had watched the papers for some announcement of a reward for returning her.

"Girls make wonderful pets about the house," he explained. "It's hard to teach them tricks, but they're very affectionate."

Joie, the Yale student, claimed that Yvonne had come with him and that he had left her beneath a chair in the box while he went out to pick a bunch of fresh fights for the vase in the parlor. Joie was costumed as Louis XIV, in black evening clothes, with a red sash around his waist. Wimberg had come in a raccoon coat as A Student at Yale.

During the fight, a Mr. Harold Virium, Princeton ' 27, dparted with Yvonne. Mr. Virium, disdaining all pretense, just came as himself—democratic, plain old Harold Virium, Princeton '27.

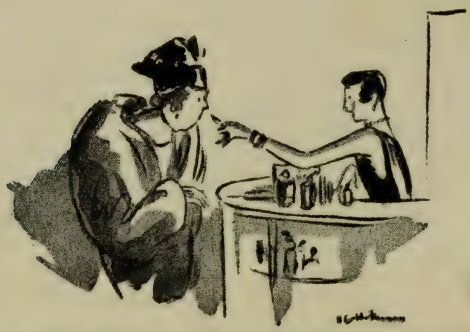
At three-thirty a Miss Cixey of Dallas, here studying music, finished her second gulp of warm rye from a hip pocket flask and was carried out, not protesting very much. She'll be all right in a few minutes.

Five minutes later, Tom Diddy, Harvard fullback and recently voted the handsomest man in his class, approached aristocratic Mrs. Mellinger van Imbringham, and putting his arm around her $12,000,000 waist (which her father had imported brick by brick from Europe) drew her roughly to him.

One minute later Mrs. van Imbringham and Mr. Diddy were introduced formally by an old acquaintance and neither one of them had ever laid eyes on the other before.

The committee on Tom Diddy and Mrs. van Imbringham, to which much of the credit for the success of the affair should go, consisted of Samuel Untermyer, Max D. Steuer, Charles E. Hughes, Otto H. Kahn, the President of the New York Academy of Medicine, ex-officio, and Rear Admiral Charles Plunkett.

Rear Admiral Plunkett came as Louis XIV. —Frank Sullivan



"This is 'N' Aimez Que Moi', madame—'Don't love nobody but me'."

SOCIAL ERRORS

THE YOUNG MAN WHO ASKED FOR A PACK OF CAMELS IN DUNHILL'S

THE BROWN DERBY AND THE BEE

THE ninth paragraph of a Syracuse dispatch to the *World*, dated September 29, 1922, was:

"At eleven o'clock last night Al Smith was a beaten man."

Al Smith, political product of the streets shadowed by Brooklyn Bridge and Tammany's favorite son, was defying the Boss.

Al Smith

"As the midnight hour approached," ran the dispatch, "man after man crossed the threshold of the unpretentious headquarters in the Onondaga Hotel and implored Smith to forget principle and embrace expediency: 'I'm damned if I will,' repeatedly replied the ex-Governor. 'I may be licked, but I will lick Hearst, too, if it is the last act of my life.' Down in the lobby . . . . the Tammany men began to desert 'Our Al.' In their opinion Al was committing the cardinal sin. That was the last straw. They began to say that Al had the swelled head and thought himself bigger than Murphy."

Well, the fact is, he was. And when Murphy died he long had known it. Al Smith saved Tammany and made himself a national figure when he refused to compromise with W. R. Hearst at Syracuse. Maybe, as Murphy's closer friends suggest, Smith was doing what the Boss hoped he would do. Maybe the upstate anti-Hearst bloc organized by Billy Kelly was the secret work of Murphy, who for strategical reasons pretended to be for Hearst. Politics is full of such diableries. But the surface and subsurface at Syracuse when the dispatch was sent to the *World* that night bore no traces that Murphy wanted Smith to do anything more heroic than to compromise.

The dispatch from which these excertps are taken was written by Charles S. Hand. It will be a long time before any reporter writes a better one, largely for the reason that no reporter for a long time will have any such story to recount.

Smith was at the crossroads of his life. In 1918 he was elected Governor, one of the few Democratic survivors of the vote by which the entire nation turned its back on Woodrow Wilson when the President was in direst need of the prestige of victory. In 1920 the anti-Wilson sentiment had grown so powerful that

Smith's second nomination could not surmount it. So at Syracuse, in 1922, Smith was a candidate for the gubernatorial nomination again and Hearst was a candidate, too. He was a candidate for Governor first, and, if he could not have that, he was a candidate for Senator. Why this fairly cynical publisher of great ability, this editor who shows by the contemptuous courage of inconsistency, how great an expert he is on American boobology—why Hearst has ever wanted an office is one of the psychological mysteries of this century. But he has wanted many—and held one.

Smith knew that a nomination for Hearst meant turning Tammany over to the dictation of the editor. He also knew that, if he refused to compromise with Hearst and were nominated himself, he might be beaten again; that a second defeat would end his political leadership and form a foundation for that very rule of Tammany by Hearst which Smith had set himself to prevent. The question before Smith was:

"Can I prove myself stronger than all the rules of the game of politics?"

"I think I can," he answered himself. And he did.

Therefore, when Mayor Hylan, at the head of the Hearst forces, compelled the Tammany leaders to urge Smith to make a deal with Hearst, he assumed the poetic position of Fitz-James and said in the hearing of the assembled press:

"Maybe it won't be me. I can stand it. But it won't be Hearst."

For Hearst had accused Smith in his papers of neglecting food standards in the city at the expense of the tenement children, and that was a charge this rough-and-tumble politician from the Bowery resented with every decent impulse in him. He knew as well as another the playful Hearst practice of calling a political opponent every kind of name, making every sort of charge, and forgetting them when the campaign was over, particularly if Hearst had lost the battle. He knew as well as another that the practice of American politics everywhere is to make friendly bed this year with the bitter enemies of last year. Such beds Smith himself made. Many charges he has forgotten. But this one—

The compromisers suggested that Smith and Hearst divide the nominations, either taking the governorship, the other running for senator. I quote again from Hand's dispatch:

" 'Why hold hard feelings against Hearst?' a friend asked persuasively. 'He is willing to let bygones be bygones. Why can't you do the same?'

" 'That fellow!' Al replied, tears welling in his eyes. 'Hearst said that I killed the babies by allowing impure milk to come into New York City—me, the father of six children. And he knows it was a damnable lie. Remember those pictures of the forlorn children and the poverty-stricken mothers? God! . . . If they want Hearst to run with me, I'm through.' "

That was at eleven o'clock. Two hours later Hylan was on his way back to New York City. Hearst had withdrawn, with the statement that Smith was a "reactionary." Whatever that meant, there had certainly been a reaction.

"How are we going to elect our local candidates without Hearst's money and Hearst's newspapers?" the frightened boys asked one another in

the Onondaga lobby. Smith showed them. He uplifted his Wagnerian voice against Governor Nathan Miller. He discussed state problems with knowledge and skill that reminded up-state Republicans of Hughes and Root. He belabored Hearst whenever he felt like it, and only when he was doing this did his tone and text go blank of the good-humored tolerance with which he discusses every other man and issue. His brown derby—for he has worn one of these incredibilities since long before they went into a proverb—bobbed alone over the upstate trail and mingled with many others in the city. He defeated Governor Miller because he took the urban side of the issues and because he is an abler expounder of state problems than even the able man who defeated him in 1920. Smith became stronger before the people of the electorate than any other politician had been for years. And even after the Democratic National Convention of 1924, when he had failed of the presidential nomination because he was a Catholic and a Tammany wet, he was elected governor for the third time by a majority matching that of President Coolidge, who ran on the opposing ticket.

Other men have done something of this. Other Democrats, like George Chamberlain of Oregon, have been repeated victors in Republican states. Other Republicans, like W. O. Bradley of Kentucky, have frequently beaten Democrats for office in Democratic states. De Witt Clinton was elected governor of New York as often as Al Smith has been. But this is what Smith has done that Chamberlain nor Bradley nor Clinton nor any other American politician I know of has done:

He has controlled three enemy legislatures, single-handed. Governor Hughes had enough trouble trying to dominate the assemblies of his own party. Smith has made his legislative program the seemingly righteous one, united the Republican masses behind him with the Democratic masses, and divided the Republican politicians against themselves. He has prevented Republican legislatures from successfully playing politics against him by the simple expedient of knowing the popular side. And, most curious of all, instead of going on the theory that he must expect obstruction from a Republican legislature, he has taken exactly the opposite course. He has insisted that his recommendations should be dealt with, not politically, but popularly. That departs widely from the American tradition. Smith, indignant when the Republican leaders at Albany tried politics on him, has exclaimed, as if from Delphi, as if it meant anything in politics, "The people want this." And, turning to his constituency, through the radio and the press, he has cowed the legislature so many times that politicians are beginning to have nightmares of a barren future when Republicans will be rebuked for fighting Democrats because they are Democrats, and vice versa.

There has been talk in this country of the need for business men in politics. The theory is that they would conduct government as a business. But there isn't an industrial executive on the golf links who could treat state problems more as a business than Al Smith does. And, except for a while in the Fulton Fish Market,

and a year or so in the trucking business, Smith has been in politics all his life. He can't help grinning his Yellow Kid grin when he hears a secretary report that he, or any one else, is in "conference." He could teach business men a lot about the business of governing. And when it comes to vote-getting and building up public pressure, he does business with a thoroughness and resourcefulness no business man could entirely comprehend.

Tammany made him, and then he made Tammany. He smokes and drinks and swears (see above), and he doesn't come down marble staircases with any grace at all. He is rather short, and his teeth were not worked on by orthodontists in the days of his Bowery juvenescence. There is nothing commanding about his physical appearance until he gets mad on a speaking platform. (Supra) he often wears a brown derby. His voice is rasping. His accent has been known to make Boston women flinch. He *will* say "horsepital" and raddio." If any one talks bunk to him, he harshly exclaims: "Boloney!" In private speech he favors "ain't" and "between you and I," although he never commits these solecisms in public appearances. He loves to sit around with men and sing songs out of the old songsters. He keeps a zoo at the executive mansion and has six children. He never goes anywhere without his wife, to whom he has been married twenty-five years, because he loves her. He kissed her heartily, and his eyes were wet, when Mrs. Smith took a trip abroad last year.

There is nothing smooth about Al Smith—but the turn of his mind. There is nothing brilliant about him—but his achievements. Many people who believe all McGuffey wrote and Gilbert Stuart painted have asked whether gently bred folk can, without wincing, think of Al Smith in the seat of Washington and Madison. That seat withstood the plebeian contacts of Lincoln and Jackson, and once Harry Daugherty placed a Senator on it who chipped in many an ante from there. My personal feeling is that Al Smith would raise its average—the chair, not the ante. It is part of his personal simplicity that he is not a gambling man.

The Governor has already made a personal conquest of Washington. Those who are fearful of his ability to live up to the amenities and dignities of life should have gone to the winter dinner of the Gridiron Club in 1925. Among those present were the President, the Secretary of State, and sundry Senators. Gridiron speeches are supposed to be witty, deft. "Ladies are always present; reporters are never present" is the allegory set down for the diners, who are all males, and many of whom are reporters. There was more interest that night in what Smith would say than in any other speech. It was also his first visit in Washington. He began:

"I am grateful to be here and surprised to be at the head table. I remember very well the first dinner of the Albany correspondents I went to. Somebody had a loose ticket and I, a green assemblyman from the low East Side, was given a seat way out under the balcony where I couldn't hear much. On my way to the dinner I heard sleigh bells and saw a handsome snow vehicle dash by. In it sat a gentleman in a fur coat.

"'Who's that?' I asked Tom Foley, who got me in to the dinner.

"'That's the Governor," he said.

"When I got to the dinner the Governor was sitting in the best seat, relatively just where you are sitting now, Mr. Coolidge.

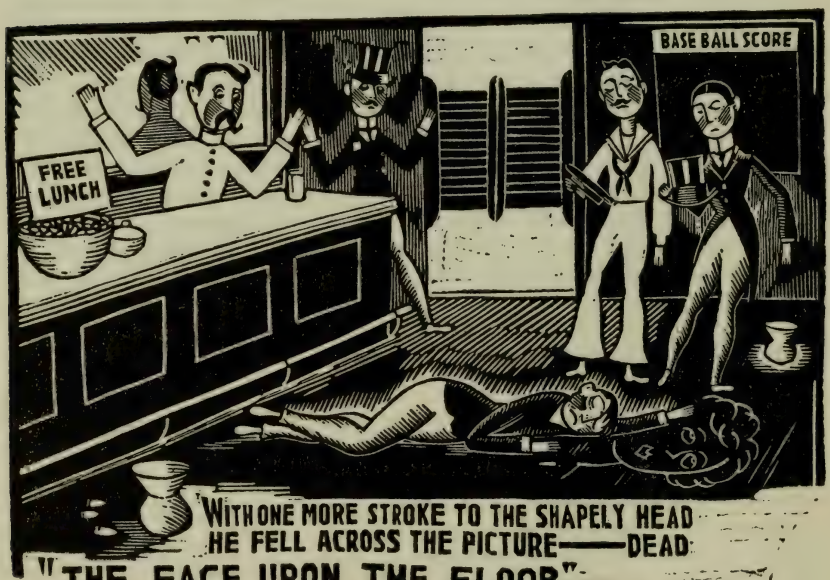
"'That's the job for me,' said I to Tom."

Then, turning to Charles Evan Hughes with that Eddie Foy grin of his, Smith resumed:

"The Governor of New York looked very much then like he does now, except that he's bobbed his whiskers."

Two days later he made some remarks in an open hearing, about the state budget, that were as sound and serious and well informed as if their source had been the Great God Mellon. But at a Gridiron dinner the Great God Mellon is a flop.

—Arthur Krock



"WITH ONE MORE STROKE TO THE SHAPELY HEAD
HE FELL ACROSS THE PICTURE——DEAD"

"THE FACE UPON THE FLOOR"
AN ENGRAVING BY JOHN HELD JR INCLUDED IN HIS
THESIS AMERICANA

MY SILVER DRESS

Reflections of a Lady to Whom an Intelligent Young Gentleman Is Talking of Politics and Art

I WISH I'd worn my silver dress; of course it was raining blue thunderbolts when I started, but this old gold thing is beginning to look like the devil; in a charming room like this it's really barbarous, and then with silver walls it would have been lovely; all the other women in wonderful taffeta *robes de style;* pink and peach and cream color; good Lord what a fool I was!

I must look like the devil; I wish I'd worn my silver dress; it's precisely like me to appear in this scene of elegance in this crazy gold one that looks like hop-sacking; at least like my idea of hop-sacking or is it sack-cloth?

Why am I always such a fool and why are all these other women so marvelous? I never saw such tidy hair in all my life; mine is without exception the worst hair in the world; it goes every which way and it's an absolutely rotten kind of hair; if I'd worn my silver dress I might have looked halfway decent, I suppose; why on this night of all nights didn't I wear my silver dress?

It might have made all the difference; imagine my looking like a beggar woman or a horrible rough bear-cub in the middle of this exquisite room; silver walls and crystal sconces and roses and everything that I love, and I didn't have the sense to wear my silver dress; I wonder if anyone was ever such a fool before?

I wouldn't so much mind not having a bran-new taffeta dress like every darn one of these other women if only I'd worn my silver dress; after all it would have been lovely in this room and silver looks much more like spring than gold; I'm the only person in the whole world who could have been such a fool as to come in this rough brutal bear-cub gold dress and in April and among all these roses and lilies and the other things I love; silver walls and crystal sconces and beautiful black lacquer and I in the midst of it looking like a savage Orson to everyone else's Valentine; damn it I am the most infernal fool alive, and then all the other skirts are so much longer and all the other women look so ladylike and gentlewomanly except myself and I look precisely like a fool.

Why have I these terrible long legs? Why the devil am I so tall? Why do I look like some bear-cub? Why do I stride about looking like an enormously tall bear-cub in this crazy gold dress among all the beautiful people?

Everyone else is so exquisite and sleek and gentle and I am like a rough crazy blot on the delicate loveliness of this room; this week of all weeks of course Mr. Talloh wouldn't wave my hair; Fanny never makes it look the same, and anyway it's rotten hair and a remarkably silly color; cinnamon bear-cub color; I have always hated my nose but if I had worn my silver dress I might feel more reconciled to it; really these lovely women in pale-pink taffeta dresses have the

most delightful noses I ever beheld!

I suppose I'm the only woman in the room without a straight nose and a short upper lip and a new taffeta dress; and the wind has blown my hair into whiffets; it's outrageous hair and I dislike it intensely; I dislike my eyebrows; I have a nice mouth but it would be nicer if I'd worn my silver dress; how happy I might have been if only I'd worn my silver dress!

It's sacrilege to drink good champagne in a dreadful dress like this; it's an uncivilized dress; it's precisely the sort of dress that a tall bear-cub might wear; crazy rough gold; the child she-bear!

April and all these flowers and lovely things and this enchanting silver room with sconces of showery crystal and I didn't even have the sense to wear my silver dress!

Oh, I know it was raining when I started, but anyone else would have guessed that it would clear; with a moon and stars, and in April; all the other women have perfectly new silver slippers and mine are gold and have splashes of rain on them.

It might have made all the difference if I'd worn my silver dress; now it's too late forever; probably I'll never be anything but an infernal fool; I wish I'd worn my silver dress!

—Elinor Wylie

"Waiter."

A MYSTERY REVIVED

IT IS not difficult, after a week-end spent in New Brunswick and its environs, to reach a very definite conclusion concerning the revival of the celebrated Hall-Mills case. Of course I pretend to no particular expertness in the analyzing of crimes. And I encountered, during my visit to the town, no information which could properly be called secret —inside stuff, as the phrase goes. But at least I inspected the situation with rational eyes, and I came away from New Brunswick quite sure that the result of the present excitement, for all its midnight arrests and promise of coming sensations and new clues that wash ashore with every hour or two, will be precisely nothing. They will not, I think, bring the Widow Hall to trial. They do not, in my opinion, possess any evidence against her or against anybody else which solves the mystery, or which will bring the murderer to bay.

The arrest of Mrs. Hall and all of the events surrounding it came about because the *Daily Mirror*, a tabloid newspaper owned by Mr. Hearst, published the result of an investigation it had been conducting for a year, and claimed the detection of the murderer at the very moment when a local political situation in Somerset County, and indeed in all of New Jersey, was ripe for such a thing. The facts discovered by the *Mirror* were inflated beyond their actual worth for the simple reason that the name of Hearst has always possessed a peculiar ability to stampede political office holders. And already the official gentlemen who plunged ahead with accusations, arrests, and promises are beginning to regret their haste.

It is interesting, at the very outset, to observe the activity of the *Mirror*, because that activity is really the key to the whole present upheaval. A year ago a gentleman named Philip Payne, who already had demonstrated his genius as managing editor of the *Daily News*, was employed by Mr. Hearst to run the *Mirror*. Circulation figures, of course, were to be used as the gauge of his success. Following the Hearst practice in the pursuit of readers, Mr. Payne cast about for some criminal episode upon which he might play violently, a mystery to solve, a fleeing murderer upon whose trail he might set his sleuth reporters. Unfortunately, there were not any crimes—any great, mysterious crimes with that dramatic quality which even the most inventive newspapers cannot produce synthetically. So Mr. Payne decided to go after an old crime, an old mystery. He dispatched Mr. Herbert Mayer, the best of his detective-journalists, to New Brunswick with instructions to clear up the Hall-Mills case.

A year later, that is to say a month or two ago, Mr. Mayer produced his evidence. It was good newspaper stuff, most of it. A man named Riehl, who had married a girl who was a maid in the Hall establishment at the time of the murders, sued for the annulment of his marriage. He filed

a paper saying that his wife had confessed to him that she knew all about the death of Hall and Mrs. Mills, and that Mrs. Hall had given her $8,000 to keep quiet. It looked good, and there were several minor clues in Mr. Mayer's brief case.

So Mr. Payne, a resident of New Jersey, called upon the political boss of New Jersey, Mr. Frank Hague, and laid out the situation. He mentioned the name of Hearst and the political might accruing thereto. And Mr. Hague spoke to Governor Moore, whom he had elected. Mr. Payne conferred with the Governor. He would, he said, force action—with or without the cooperation of the state authorities. And the Governor decided to cooperate. As I have said, there was a political situation centering around the office of Prosecutor Bergen of Somerset County which made a revival of the Hall-Mills case expedient. Prosecutors are appointed by the Governor in New Jersey. And it is enough explanation of that political situation to say that the state Democratic machine wished to discredit certain individuals in Somerset.

I SHOULD like to consider at this juncture certain phenomena that surrounded the original investigation of the case, four years ago. For they bear a close relation to what is happening now.

Most of us grew rather cynical in those days. Reading our newspapers, we thought it no great mystery where the guilt lay, and we concluded that the failure to solve the crime was simply one more example of the chicanery that surrounds the pursuit of justice whenever wealthy people are involved. We detected the presence of counter currents in the slow procedure of the authorities. We fancied the passing of money and of political promises. And we grew rather bitter over official incompetence.

But I think that most of us, in our disgust at the failure of the authorities to produce anything at all, lost sight of the fierce ambitions that were striving for the pelt of the murderer. We overlooked the fact that the kudos and the political reward waiting for the man who solved the Hall-Mills case would amount to more than all the bribes he could take, and all the wealthy friends he might lose in the process, and all the bitter enemies he might make. It was the chance of a lifetime for a very large number of men. And therefore, looking back, I think we can dismiss now all our old suspicions concerning the honesty of the investigators and their desire to catch the criminal.

The chief figure in that investigation was Azariah Beekman, the Prosecutor of Somerset County, where the bodies were found. He was a sober fellow, ambitious, with a reputation for strict honesty, not brilliant of wit but persistent, and moved from the very first by a firm conviction that Mrs. Hall was guilty. With such means as he had he sought his evidence, hampered by the dozens of other investigations that constantly fouled the trails and strove to confuse him so that he might be prevented from taking the credit. He believed that in the end he would be able to convict.

At the time of the crime, New Jersey was preparing to elect a Gov-

ernor. The region was crowded with newspaper men, the state was thoroughly stirred by the episode, and the politicians decided that the solution of its crime, or its failure of solution, would have a powerful effect upon the political fortunes of the Governor, who was seeking reelection, and naturally upon his appointees. The two chief investigations that paralleled Beekman's were those of the State Police and Prosecutor Stricker of Middlesex County, wherein the victims had lived, and wherein occurred all the events leading up to the crime.

These two interests insisted upon immediate action. They wanted a grand-stand play, an arrest, an indictment, a trial—anything so long as somebody might be definitely accused and the mob satisfied before election time. But Beekman was indifferent to this enthusiasm. He wanted to indict Mrs. Hall, and he wanted to be sure of his evidence before he went before the Grand Jury. When the State Police and Stricker demanded that the case be brought to a head, Beekman called on the Governor for the appointment of a Special Prosecutor. He did not consent to precipitate action.

The Special Prosecutor was appointed. He gathered up the story of the Pig Woman, the story of the man Phillips who said he saw Mrs. Hall returning to her home at two A.M., and all other evidence that was available, and asked the Grand Jury to indict the widow. The Grand Jury refused. There was no tangible evidence, as Beekman knew well.

The frenzy died soon thereafter. But Beekman kept plugging on in his persistent way. He was made a judge, but he did not drop the Hall-Mills case. Two years after the murders he used to call newspaper reporters from New York and go over with them such new details as he had discovered. He would ask their advice, laying the entire case out before them again just to refresh their memories, and he actually worked day and night on the old mystery. I think it is plain evidence of his earnestness and integrity that he summoned a reporter for one of the most dignified of New York papers, a man who worked all through the case at the time it was fresh, and proposed that he spend a year in Somerset County running down clues. In return for the reporter's work, he would, he said, give his paper exclusive news about the case.

Beekman ended by working himself to death over the Hall-Mills case. He died very suddenly in March, 1925, still convinced that Mrs. Hall was guilty and still convinced that he did not have enough evidence to convict her—and thereby win eternal fame.

IN the light of Beekman's activity —granting that he was honest and determined even if we do not grant that he was a brilliant detective —it is much easier to perceive the value of the new situation. There were, let us say, witnesses who lied during that original investigation. There were, we may further agree, vital witnesses who eluded the detectives in those old days, whose testimony was never taken. And it is conceivable that the *Daily Mirror* argued or bought the truth from lying witnesses, found the witnesses who did not come forward when the

case was fresh. But what are they worth now?

There are, as I see it, only three premises upon which a new prosecution may be founded: first, the production of an eyewitness to the shooting of Mr. Hall and Mrs. Mills; secondly, a confession from the murderer; thirdly, the production of a witness who will say, "X told me he did it."

The preparation of a case on any other kind of evidence, that is to say on circumstantial evidence, will be prodigiously difficult after four years. Memories are faulty and jurors are hard to convince. And even if an eyewitness were produced who would say, after a lapse of four years, that he watched while the shooting went on, he would find himself in a pickle. Keeping silent for so long would make him liable to guilt himself, as accessory after the fact. Certainly, I do not believe that any such witness has been found. For if he had been, it is sure that he would now be held as a material witness, under lock and key. Plainly, there has been no confession from Mrs. Hall, or from anybody else. And quite as plainly no person has been found to say, "Mrs. Hall told me she is guilty." For such a person, too, would be in jail now.

Witnesses may have lied, for profit or friendship, in defense of the murderer. If that is true, I think they will continue lying, since to confess their fault now would be to confess perjury. The bungling of the investigators may have caused the loss of evidence that would lead to a conviction. If that is true, I believe such evidence irrecoverably lost. Even if it were produced, now, it would be difficult to credit.

Whatever is true, I believe that the authorities are quite as far at this moment from the conviction of the criminal as they were four years ago. I do not believe that the *Mirror's* evidence is of any actual value, except of course as it serves the purposes of sensational journalism. It is worth noting, for exemple, that all of the *Mirror's* facts were laid before Mr. John Toolan, the Prosecutor of Middlesex County, who was Mr. Stricker's assitant in 1922. And Mr. Toolan, after examining it, announced he would not touch the case. Mr. Toolan is a young and an ambitious man.

To such of us as find our romance in the bloody and dramatic crimes of men, it is not a matter for vast regret that the Hall-Mills case will not be solved. It would be tragic for it to suffer the denouement, already guessed and not quite satisfactory, that comes at the end of the ordinary detective story —MORRIS MARKEY

THE TRAVELLER*

AN IDYLL

(The scene is the smoking compartment of a Pullman car. It is twenty-two minutes after six of a beautiful April evening. No one is in the compartment, but Morton Fielding, a cultured Pullman porter, is standing in the corridor beside the compartment entrance. He carries a bag of golf sticks, and two travelling bags. He is waiting for the owner to follow him.)

MORTON: All right, sir. This way to the various other parts of the car. *(He waits politely, but the passenger, Kenneth Lang Mercer, a handsome mail-order house executive of forty, is still out on the platform of the train.)* The rest of the car is in here, sir.

(Mr. Mercer enters. Naturally he is excited as it is his first trip on a train in a long time.)

MERCER: I'm sorry I was so long.

MORTON *(making friends):* That's all right. Don't think about it.

MERCER: I was watching the different people getting on board the train.

MORTON: Were they interesting?

MERCER: Just various types. You know.

MORTON: I understand. *(He pushes aside the curtain of the compartment entrance with his elbow.)* Now this is the smoking compartment. Would you like to sit in here?

MERCER: I have the choice?

MORTON: You have the choice of sitting in here and smoking and chatting or else sitting in seat Number Seven in the body of the car.

MERCER *(with a grin of perplexity):* I don't know which to choose.

MORTON: Why not stop in here temporarily and then see how you feel about making a permanent choice later?

MERCER *(ever the executive):* It won't be too late?

MORTON: Oh, no. Your rights call for your using the smoking compartment whenever you wish during the

journey. Shall we say you're going in here for the time being?

MERCER *(suddenly leaping into the compartment):* Yes! That is my decision!

MORTON: Very good. I'll take these things of yours to seat Number Seven and then later we'll see how you feel.

MERCER: Good. Now I have the choice of any seat in here, I assume?

MORTON: Any seat not occupied.

MERCER *(the laugh being on him):* Very, very good. Whatever is your name?

MORTON: Morton, the porter.

MERCER: All right, Morton. My name is Mr. Mercer. *(There is a pause as this sinks in; then Mercer darts like a panther in the seat in the corner next to the window.)* And I choose this seat!

MORTON: Well, you've just chosen the best seat in the compartment, that's all!

MERCER: No kidding?

MORTON: No kidding. You see if you'd chosen the chair you'd be riding backwards, whereas this way you are riding both forwards and have the use of the window.

MERCER *(scenting a trick):* Yes, but it's getting to be night-time and there's nothing to see right now.

MORTON *(quickly):* Yes, but wait till the strain starts passing through towns!

MERCER: Oh, look! It's starting! *(He looks out the window. Morton joins him.)*

MORTON *(seeing things go past the window):* Yes, sir, it is!

MERCER: Goodbye, old Grand Central Station!

MORTON *(stolidly):* Yes, it's goodbye old Grand Central Station, sure enough.

(Mercer watches through the window a second. Then, realizing the train is really under way, suddenly finds himself adjusted to his new surroundings; and the real innate friendliness of the man comes out.)

MERCER: Gee, this is some trip! *(Morton is glad Mr. Mercer is happy and stands waiting for instructions.)* By the way, Morton, who is the conductor on our train?

MORTON: Why, a Mr. Barclay is the conductor.

MERCER: Is he nice?

MORTON: He's just a peach.

MERCER: Very good. Now about your tip—

MORTON *(edging out of the compartment, a bit embarrassed):* Let's not talk about it right now, huh?

MERCER *(understandingly):* I get you.

MORTON *(as he exits, blushing a little):* Later on.

(Mr. Mercer has a little fun inspecting the appointments of the compartment. Then he puts on his silk gloves and hardly has them buttoned, when Joseph Barclay, a fine type of railroad conductor, enters unobtrusively. Mr. Mercer sees him and rises. Each studies his man.)

BARCLAY: I'm Mr. Barclay, the conductor. Are you the gentleman that's going to One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street?

MERCER: I guess I'm the party.

BARCLAY: Well, I'm Mr. Barclay.

MERCER: Yes, Morton, your porter was telling me about you. I'm Mr. Mercer. *(Mr. Mercer is searching through his pocket-book.)* I don't know whether I've got a card here or not.

BARCLAY: Oh, that's all right. We have lots of gentlemen that we haven't seen before, riding with us.

MERCER: I guess I haven't got a card. Being a stranger and all, I thought—

BARCLAY: That's all right, sir, this is a public conveyance and we want to take care of you gentlemen whether we know you or not. Please sit down. *(Mr. Mercer sits in his seat in the corner. Mr. Barclay sits in the chair.)*

MERCER *(with a sly grin)*: You're riding backwards!

BARCLAY: Well, I'm used to roughing it. This your first trip on our line, Mr. Mercer?

MERCER: Well, the first one in a long while. You see I usually come uptown by way of the subway. Occasionally if I'm feeling good I take a taxicab ride. But today, I thought I'd sort of vary things a little and take a railroad train.

BARCLAY: That's perfectly all right. I see your point exactly.

MERCER: Do you ever get around my neighborhood, Mr. Barclay?

BARCLAY: Which neighborhood is that?

MERCER: One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street.

BARCLAY: Well, not very often. You see, being a railroad man I'm usually on my train. But I've often wanted to visit One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street.

MERCER: I thought you might know some people in my district.

BARCLAY: I fear not. Wait a minute. Have you a gentleman up there named Mastbaum?

MERCER: You mean Mastbaum, and Sons, Furniture?

BARCLAY: I certainly do.

MERCER: Well, for Heaven's sake, I should say I do! I at least know their store. Why, I pass it every day. Do you know Mr. Mastbaum?

BARCLAY: Well, not personally. But I've seen his advertisements so often I feel as if I almost do know him.

MERCER: That's just the way I feel! Well, I'll be darned! You know Mastbaum's store!

BARCLAY: Oh, Lord, yes.

MERCER: I guess I've gone past Mastbaum's store a couple of hundred times.

BARCLAY: Well, for God's sake! They certainly have nice ads.

MERCER: Oh, yes. Do you have much time for reading in the conducting business?

BARCLAY: Not very much. They keep us hustling, you know. If it isn't collecting tickets it's making new friends for the company. You see each one of us conductors is really a contact man *(Mr. Barclay blushes a little)*. Our President calls us Ambassadors of Friendship.

MERCER *(knowing how he must feel)*: Well, I guess you are at that. I guess you make a good many friends in the course of a year's time.

BARCLAY *(cheering up)*: Oh yes indeed. Some of the friendships you make on a railway train last you all your life. Now take just last week for instance when I met a gentleman from Colorado on this very train. He's going to live in the East!

MERCER: Does he like it here?

BARCLAY: Very much indeed.

MERCER: I wonder if you know a conductor by the name of Conductor George Whipple!

BARCLAY *(slowly searching his*

memory): "George Whipple." Sure it wasn't Grindle?

(Mr. Mercer searches through his purse and at last finds a card.)

MERCER *(proving it):* George Whipple.

BARCLAY: I guess I don't recall the name.

MERCER: He was a very interesting man. Mrs. Mercer and I met him on a trip to California last year. Mr. Whipple has the train between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

BARCLAY: I don't think I ever met him.

MERCER: That's too bad. I bet you fellows would probably have a lot to talk over.

BARCLAY: Well, I really get to meet very few fellows in my own line. I suppose I don't meet one new conductor a month.

MERCER: You'd like Whipple. This car reminds me of the old Tryon. Is this the Tryon?

BARCLAY: No, this is the Waukesha.

MERCER: It's like the Tryon.

BARCLAY: The taps are a little different. It's almost a sister car to the Tryon.

MERCER: I noticed the resemblance. Where is the Tryon nowadays?

BARCLAY: I had a letter from a fellow last week. He'd seen it in Pittsburgh. Going towards Cleveland, I think.

MERCER: It's a great old car. What other cars have you, Mr. Barclay, on this train?

BARCLAY *(closing his eyes):* There's the Waukesha and the Lynnbrook and the Borota. We thought we were going to have the Lake Forest, but they didn't give it to us. *(He laughs ruefully.)* Mr. Rhodes, the engineer, is sore as can be. They promised him the Lake Forest on this train. That's Mr. Rhodes' favorite car. But it wasn't to be.

MERCER: That's too bad.

BARCLAY: Office politics. Mr. Rhodes is a barrel of fun.

MERCER: Where is he now? Up in the engine?

BARCLAY: Oh, yes. He's up there keeping things going.

MERCER: I don't suppose I could meet him.

BARCLAY: Well, not while the train's going along. You see he has to keep his eye on things every minute. That prevents wrecks.

MERCER: Some other time maybe. I just thought I'd like to swap a couple of stories with him.

BARCLAY: It's too bad.

MERCER: Do you smoke, Mr. Barclay?

BARCLAY: Very, very seldom. You can't take chances with your health in this business.

MERCER: I guess not. My father wouldn't have a man work for him who smoked.

BARCLAY: My uncle was that way.

MERCER: Is he dead?

BARCLAY: He passed on years ago.

MERCER: Too bad.

BARCLAY: Yes. He was quite a character.

MERCER: My father was a great character.

BARCLAY: What was his name?

MERCER: Thomas.

BARCLAY: I have a cousin named Thomas.

MERCER: Living?

BARCLAY: He's only eighteen!

MERCER: That's fine.

(There is a pause during which

Mr. Barclay looks at Mr. Mercer's feet for a long time.)

BARCLAY: I guess hardly anybody wears button shoes any more.

MERCER: I don't like them.

BARCLAY: Do you remember them?

MERCER: Yes, sir.

BARCLAY: Am I keeping you from smoking?

MERCER: No, I didn't bring anything along, I can go without it.

(Morton appears in the entrance.)

MORTON: You gentlemen getting along all right?

MERCER: Just fine.

MORTON: The passengers are ready to give you their tickets now, Mr. Barclay. *(Barclay rises and faces Mr. Mercer with a cordial smile.)*

BARCLAY: Shall we begin with you?

MERCER *(giving him a ticket):* Might as well, I guess. If a fellow's going to ride, he's got to pay the piper.

BARCLAY: A one way ticket, eh?

MERCER *(self-conscious):* I probably will be coming back by subway.

BARCLAY: Well, that's your privilege.

MORTON: We are also pulling into One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street. I've got all your things right out here, Mr. Mercer.

MERCER: Fine stuff,Morton. It's a good thing you came in here. We were so interested in our talk I'd have gone right on to Mott Haven.

BARCLAY: One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street!

MERCER: I guess that's me.

BARCLAY: Well, I'm very glad to have met you, Mr. Mercer.

MERCER: And I'm glad to have met you, Mr. Barclay. If you're ever up in my neighborhood, don't forget to come and see a fellow. Can I write you in care of the road, here?

BARCLAY: Yes. Just address the letter to Conductor Joseph Barclay. Mighty glad to have had you with us.

MERCER: Yes indeed. Now, Morton, I'll take care of you when I get off the steps of the train.

MORTON: That's all right, Mr. Mercer. Whenever it is convenient for you.

MERCER: All right. Well goodbye, Mr. Barclay.

BARCLAY *(shaking his hand):* Good-bye and good luck.

MERCER: And the same to you.

(Mr. Mercer exits with Morton. Mr. Barclay takes a notebook and pencil from his pocket and writes.)

BARCLAY *(writing):* "Mr. Mercer."

Curtain.

—MARC CONNELLY

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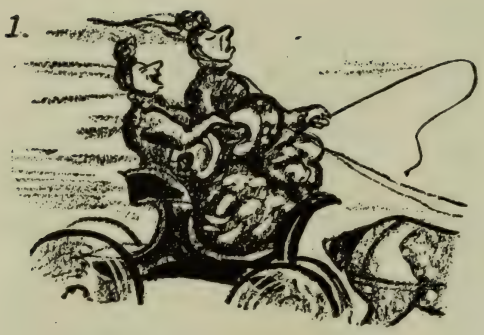


"Come on, tell us about some o' yer romances, dearie!"

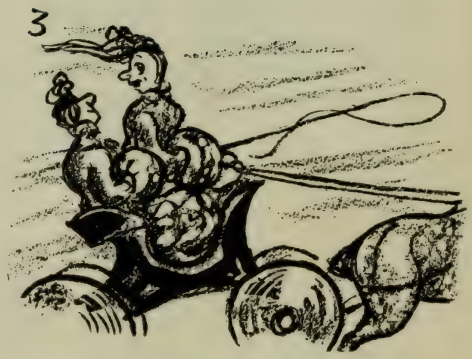
"Be still, will yuh! Y' embarrass me—giddy-up there!"

2.

"Aw c'mon—jus one, eh?"

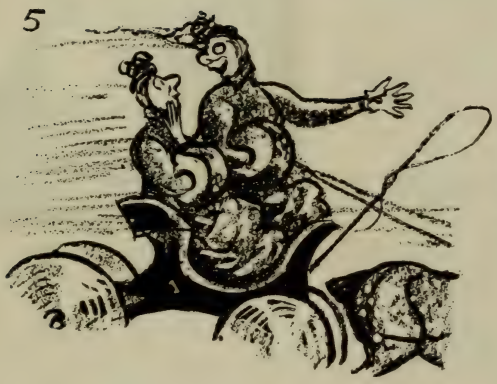
"Lordy, ain't you the pest! All right then—

3

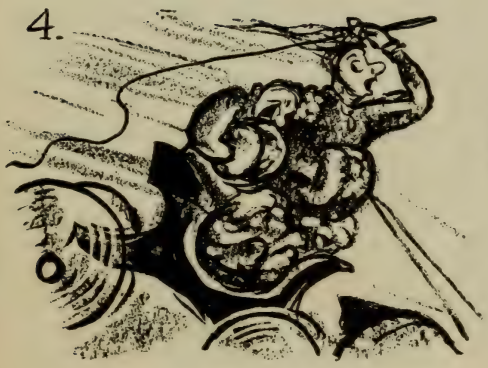


—once when I wuz a young get—giddy-up there!—I wuz out on a farm in Surrey, an' one day I wus standin' all alone in the barn when all of a sudden—

— whoops! There goes me' at!''



— whoops! I closes me eyes an' I sees dicky-birds flyin' around! Then he kisses me, an', Lordy! I close me eyes again an' I sees —



— windy, ain't it! — a great big lad of a farm-hand comes up behind me and hugs me, an'—

THE ANNIVERSARY OF A GREAT MAGAZINE

LOOKING BACK OVER THE VAST HISTORY OF THE NEW YORKER WITH MR. EUSTACE TILLEY

EIGHTEEN THIRTY-SEVEN—Nineteen Twenty-six! Just fifty years. A half-century of progress!

Always THE NEW YORKER has steered its helm straight through the shifting seas of events, let the chips fall where they may. It has stood for all that is fine in American life; it has upheld the principles of Washington and Stephen Decatur and Dr. Cadman. Such a course calls for honesty; it calls for courage; it calls for truth and it calls for faith and it calls for his fiddlers three. Bravo, NEW YORKER!

The first cover of THE NEW YORKER, *posed by Mr. Eustace Tilley himself.*

The burning of the Public Library in 1903, a calamity which was avoided by THE NEW YORKER'S *vigorous editorial policy.*

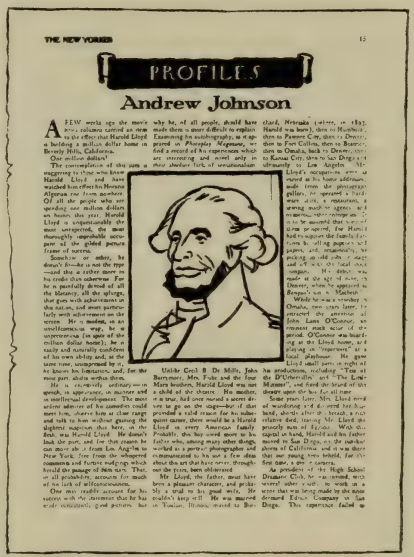
As one who has been associated with every aspect of THE NEW YORKER since it was founded I take delight in looking back upon that Manhattan Island of the first issue, which was printed in pencil on September 14, 1867. What changes have taken place! In those halcyon days, for example, a stage-line started at the Public Library (destroyed by fire in 1889, owing to a carelessly-tossed cigarette) circled Bryant Park to avoid the construction which had just started, crossed over to Broadway and ran down James G. Blaine, after which it was discontinued. Blaine was later rebuilt and turned into a Child's Restaurant; and it was here

that Harry K. Thaw shot Stanford White, who built Grant's Tomb. The tomb was demolished the following year, owing to the discovery that Grant hadn't died then.

This, of course, was before the subway had been heard of; and even if it had it wouldn't have been believed. New Yorkers were not so credulous in those days; and people used to go about from one place to another in horse-cars, or old-fashioned *barouches*, which could not go as fast as the modern taxis and which consequently got there in about half the time. The first elevated train ran along Sixth Avenue from Tony Pastor's (later Carnegie Hall) to the Hudson River, now demolished. At this time the Times Square theatre district consisted of a few scattered shanties (later Nedick Orange Booths), and the parking problem was practically nil. "Abie's Irish Rose" was still running then, and another bad feature was the mosquitoes.

THE NEW YORKER'S *first advertisement, printed November 7, 1857.*

It is hard to associate this simple picture of early New York life with the great, throbbing metropolis of today; but the changes which have taken place are inextricably woven with the history of THE NEW YORKER. As New York has increased, so has THE NEW YORKER grown from that first modest issue—stamped crudely on the back of any old scrap of paper that happened to be blowing about the office, printed by someone sitting down hard on the press; and delivered by the editor on his own bicycle. Contrast these facts with the modern printing press, capable of turning out 8,657,000 issues an hour.



THE NEW YORKER 15

PROFILES

Andrew Johnson

The famous profile of Andrew Johnson in an early issue, which resulted in his impeachment in 1843.

Contrast them, for that matter, with "The Making of a Magazine" series, and see if I haven't simply used a lot of old stuff over again.

In this half-century of progress, onward, upward, forward, THE NEW YORKER has labored constantly for the good of New York. One of the most important works which THE NEW YORKER has accomplished has been the enforcement of prohibition

in this city. By steady campaigning, editorials and cartoons, THE NEW YORKER has succeeded in cleaning up bootlegging, preventing the illicit sale of liquors in cabarets, and putting a stop once and for all to rum running in the harbor. Today New York is pointed to with pride by the Prohibition Enforcement Bureau in Washington as an example of a temperate, law-abiding community. In fact, the few bottles of liquor on sale in New York today may be laid at the door of THE NEW YORKER. Ask for Charlie.

The solution of the traffic problem is another work of which THE NEW YORKER may be justly proud. The present smooth-running ebb and flow of New York's millions, never hurried, never crowded or confused, with plently of parking space for everyone, probably on the sidewalk, has been due primarily to the vigorous stand of this paper. Much of the traffic is being borne, of course, by those thirteen new subways, all of which were built as a result of THE NEW YORKER's crusade. The orderly condition of the streets, and the degree of safety with which one may stoop to tie one's shoelace in the center of Times Square, testify to the effectiveness of THE NEW YORKER's editorial policy.

This is a history of accomplishment of which THE NEW YORKER may be justly proud; for it is safe to say that no other paper can claim a similar record. Now, upon the occasion of this anniversary, we face another year. What, we ask, will be the result of this coming twelve-month? What will these fifty-two weeks be worth? What will be their value, in cold dollars and cents, to each reader of THE NEW YORKER?

Probably, at a quick estimate, just five dollars, or the price of another annual subscription.

—COREY FORD

HOW SUCCESS CAME TO BERTIE GRAY

HANDSOME of face and gigantic of armband
Bertie Gray, born to the life of a farmhand,
Wearied in time of the earth that is earthy,
Longed he to dwell in the town that is mirthy.
Packed he his Gladstone bag, closed it with pressure,
Thumbed he his nose at the thrash of the thresher,
Bade he farewell to his true love, Olalia,
Quoth he, "I'll send for you soon, without failure,
"As soon as I'm rich we'll be wedded in marriage."
Kissed her he then, and drove off in his carriage.
Came he in time to the city of beauty,
Wrote his Olalia from love and from duty.
Pounded he pavements in search of employment,
Wept he at learning the cost of enjoyment.
Got he a job in a store that sells shoeses
To ladies of wealth at a price that amuses.
Bent he his head over hundreds of ankles,
Stooped he his back with loud crackings and crankles.
Soft grew his hands and his muscles like putty,
Learned he to laugh at all wise-crackings smutty.
Brushed he his locks in a manner pomaded,
Wore he a boutonniere fresh and unfaded.
Lost he all trace of a culture quite porky,
Came he, in time, to be very New Yorkey.
Ceased he to write to Olalia the buxom,
Winced he at thought of her figure so trucksome,
Twirled he his mustache with cynical motion,
Learned he to scoff then at love and devotion.
Sought he in vain for a way to make money,
Clerked he until it had ceased to be funny.
Came to buy shoes one day, in a great hurry,
Famous, most scandalous, Fritzi De Murray,
Fair as to feature, divine as to body,
In morals and grey-matter awfully shoddy.
Told she the Boss to deliver the slippers—
Bertie Gray seized his Big Chance with both flippers.
Took he the shoes to his bedroom so tiny,
Pressed he his coat and his trousers so shiny,
Sat he 'til one o'clock, then, all a'quiver,
Started he out with the shoes to deliver.

Knocked he upon her room door most politely,
Opened it, gazed on a scene most unsightly.
Burglars had been there, had beaten and bound her,
Tightly the nightgown she wore they'd wrapped round her.
Bert took a look and his heart did a dance then,
Stripped he himself of his coat, vest and pants then,
Seized he a lamp made of rare alabaster,
Soundly himself on the bean he did plaster
And, as the blood gushed in streams from his tall head,
Laid himself down on the rug and looked all dead.
Came in good time, then, policemen and others,
Reporters and with them their camera brothers,
Took they then pictures of Fritzi and Bertie,
Printed they them with allusions quite dirty.
"Shoe Clerk and Actress Surprised By Bold Bandit!"
Publicity? Fritzi and Bert could both stand it!
Came then the ladies of pocketbooks ample
Eager to see if the Shoe-Clerk would sample
Just a small bit of their own brand of passion;
Bertie, in fact, soon became quite the fashion
Asked he his Boss for a raise in his wages,
Got it, asked more, and still more, in quick stages.
Sank he his voice to a whisper seductive
Which he soon found was immensely productive
Of cash, for he always sold fourteen new pairs to
Clients he breathed of immoral affairs to.
Took he at last then the store as part payment
Of what he was worth since removing his raiment,
Tells he his shoe-clerks now, "I got ahead by
"Picking the time and the girl to play dead by!"

—Stuart H. Hawkins

ABOARD THE MAYFLOWER

THIS unofficial observer calculates that it cost the American people $3,000.00 net to get the President on board the *Mayflower* that day. But it was worth it.

The group of Washington correspondents courteously bidden by Mr. Coolidge to an afternoon cruise down the lordly Potomac were advised to be aboard at 1:45 P. M. They were.

The graceful ship lay at the jetty with her gang-plank inclining sharply from her deck. Up this sublimated chicken-ladder the correspondents trooped, and they were met, saluted, and shaken by the hand by no less a personage than Captain Andrews, U.S.N., commanding.

Then they scattered about the deck until the shrill note of a bugle in the distance betokened the arrival at the Navy Yard gates of the President of the United States. It was 1:59. The President is nothing if not prompt.

The bugle call stirred the ship into action. A trig naval officer bellowed: "Man the rail." Now the *Mayflower*, for some reason or other, is manned by 160 Marines; fine, strapping soldiers. This complement is in addition to the sailors, deck hands, stewards, and engineroom men. The intrepid 160 manned the rail.

Two funereal-looking cars drew up at the foot of the sloping gangplank. Secret Service men leaped from the rear car and flung open the door of the first, whence clambered the President.

The gallant 160 presented arms. The buglers blew the President's call. The President returned the salutes of the officers and representatives of the corps of correspondents who stood to greet him, like the bellboys in a hotel lobby. Then he proceeded to climb the gangplank.

Now the President of the United States of America is not a big man physically but one very trim and well set up. His suit of clothes was of decent blue serge and very plain in cut. His shoes were black, with a suggestion of hard-boiled eggs in the toes. Sewed to the back of each shoe was a braid loop, an old-fashioned pull-on, into which one is presumed to insert a finger and tuge valiantly until all pedal obstacles are overcome.

These Presidential shoes were new and made well and honestly enough to outlast the Administration and perhaps a third term. The pull-ons were stiff and proud in their newness. They stood erect, bending a trifle outward. It was inevitable that the back of the President's trouser bottoms should catch upon them. It was not only an inevitable but a present phenomenon. As the President ascended the gangplank, each trouser was hitched up and resting comfortably in the niche between pull-on and ankle.

Now here was drama! As the President's foot touched the deck, the band wrenched forth "The Star Spangled Banner" in full cry. The manful 160 continued to present arms. The ship's officers saluted. The correspondents removed their hats and stood first on one foot and then on the other. The President held the hard straw hat over his heart. The pull-ons held the backs of his trousers hitched up. It was grand!

Then the band played "Hail to the Chief!" and the President moved to a station on the after deck. There passed before him his guests. Mr. Coolidge shook the hand of each, usually calling him by name. He was cordial.

After that he went below and was gone for twenty minutes.

Meantime, an enormous machine began to rumble along a track which ran down to the jetty, and came to a halt near the foot of the gangplank. A argantuan arm swung around toward the ship, bent and grasped the gangplank, swung it free of the *Mayflower*, and deposited it on the ground.

Lines were cast off fore and aft and we drifted into the fairway. The engines started their quarrel and the screw began spurning the slack water.

Now, more drama. No sooner had the strip of water between ship and jetty begun to widen than the bow guns were swung out, port and starboard, manned with gunners of the United States Navy who knew their business. They blazed away with the Presidential salute of twenty-one guns. The detonations shook the air and the waves of sound reverberated among the hills of Maryland and were thrown echoing back from canning factory, car barn, insane asylum, and machine shop. It seemed that the du Ponts must have heard the firing even at Wilmington. It was grand!

By this time the President had emerged from his cabin of state wearing, if you please, as natty a white canvas yachting cap as ever graced the hopeful head of Sir Thomas Lipton. From his somewhat exiguous and dispassionate lips protruded a gleaming white quill and pasteboard cigar holder, and from the gleaming white quill and pasteboard cigar holder protruded a tobacco-colored cigar.

The President was aboard! The Presidential yacht was afloat on the historic stream of Presidents. The loyal guard of 160 was at hand. The band had played the national anthem. The great guns had boomed the Presidential salute. In a word, as Lord Macaulay would say, everything was hotsy-totsy. Remained but for the President to mingle with his guests.

The faithful Rob Roy stalked beside the President. Tall, willowy, graceful, and extraordinary intelligent, he looked prouder of his coat than of his companion. It was as white as a sail painted by Sorolla.

Two distinguished Washington correspondents had drifted to what they regarded as a snug harbor on the after deck. Systematically, the President began at the after end of the ship to make his round of personal contacts. He seated himself beside the correspondents.

It is not quite court etiquette to open a conversation with the President, so they waited. After several minutes during which Mr. Coolidge had closely watched Rob Roy's nervous sniffings and meanderings to and fro, he sopke. The first utterance of the President of the United States on this particular voyage was: "Dog don't care much for the boat. Thinks he's in the ha-ouse. Well trained dog."

There was nothing to be said.

Another long pause and the President gazed over the side. Then: "River's kinda muddy up here. Gets clearer further da-own."

After another minute or two he rose and walked away with Rob Roy beside him, the latter doubtless still thinking himself in the house.

Our two correspondents, intent upon not being further dismayed or embarrassed, darted from their places and raced down to another deck and as far forward as they could go. But they reckoned without the calculating system of the President. He had determined to show personal attention to every guest.

No sooner had the two correspondents ensconced themselves than the President dropped into a chair beside them. He looked at them, in an identifying sense, nor more carefully than he had before. They were merely two more guests. After a decent paused he spoke: "River's kinda muddy up here. Gets clearer further da-own."

The correspondents had learned the sytsem by this experience, so they did not move again, thereby placing no further burden on the President's earnest efforts at cordiality.

The President went aft again and sat beside other correspondents. He said to them: "River's kinda muddy up here. Gets clearer further da-own." Later he touched on Rob Roy's psychological infirmity.

Mr. Coolidge watched the river narrowly and did not let slip his last chance. Down the stream greener water could be seen, and it was obvious that the upper muddied reaches would soon be left behind. He moved to another group and remarked: "River's kinda muddy up here. Gets clearer further da-own."

But now the *Mayflower* swam upon the sea-green bosom of the Potomac and the President went below. He sent for one of the correspondents and read him a speech soon to be delivered, seeking his opinion. That took up the time until Mount Vernon was sighted, shining like an altar down a verdue-bowered reach of the river.

A picked detail of the 160 Praetorians, under a commissioned officer's command, marched smartly out on deck on the starboard side. The President took up a station beside them, his trousers still hitched up over his pull-ons. At the word, the soldiers presented arms and their commander came to salute with his sword while their commander-in-chief—theirs and thousands of others' besides—saluted with as trim a military grace as a West Point cadet. The band played "The Star Spangled Banner." So they stood while the graceful ship glided past the erstwhile home and last resting place of George Washington, gentleman, of Virginia, General of the Armies and President of the United States.

Other topics of conversation were found on the remainder of the voyage downstream. Those who conversed with the President found him informed in detail as to the numerous historical associations which cling about the land on either side—colonial Maryland and colonial Virginia.

On the return up-river, the same impressive ceremony was enacted when Mount Vernon was repassed, the President again participating.

The buffet tea which was served in the state dining room late in the afternoon was plenteous in true New England style. The President's hospitality was unbounded. The ship was thrown open without restraint. One wandered from state cabin to

state cabin. Large, light, airy bedrooms opened off roomy foyers lined with bookcases.

On these twin beds one could read gold plates telling that they had been occupied by the King and Queen of the Belgians; on those appeared the names of President and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson.

The bathtubs are carved out of solid blocks of marble. They are huge; long and deep. One vast tub shows a crack straight through the marble. There is a legend that the crack dates back to the Presidency of William Howard Taft, Chief Justice of the United States.

As the *Mayflower* steamed up the river in the late afternoon light the President stood at the rail and gazed fixedly upon the ancient city of Alexandria, once a leading port of Virginia and in the time of the first few presidents far more populous than the capital of the United States. He had come to the rail beside one of the correspondents. As more than a reasonable time had elapsed for some Presidential utterance to be heard, this correspondent had the temerity to attempt a gambit of his own.

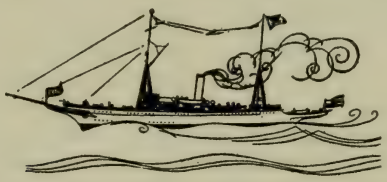
"Mr. President," quoth he, "yonder is Alexandria." The President looked even more closely; almost as if his attention had just been directed to something he had not earlier descried. He said nothing.

"Mr. President," the correspondent essayed again, "did you know that there is in the Library of Congress a letter written by George Washington to the Chamber of Commerce of Alexandria saying to those commercial gentlemen that if they did not show more enterprise New York would outstrip them and become a more important port?"

No answer while the President scanned the horizon outlined against the reddening sky. He would make no hasty nor ill considered comment. He appeared to be counting the houses. Then, after his eyes had traversed the quiet town, he said:

"Sa-ound prediction."

Later Mr. Coolidge went upon the bridge with Captain Andrews. Nimbly he mounted the steep companion, his trousers hitched up over the pull-ons. White yachting cap on his head, white cigar-holder between his teeth, he stood like Lord Nelson and eyed the ship to her mooring. One doubted if Captain Andrews could have fetched it alone.

So we all went ashore and uptown, one of the older correspondents in this observer's car recalling how Chester A. Arthur always served liquor on his parties. There were tears in his eyes as big as macaroons.

—H. J. D.